

# Magic Sam

G I V E M E T I M E

DD-654



# Magic Sam

## GIVE ME TIME

- 1 Give Me Time 3:25
- 2 You Belong To Me 3:47
- 3 That's Why I'm Crying 3:22
- 4 You're So Fine 2:52
- 5 Come Into My Arms 1:53
- 6 I Can't Quit You Baby 3:51
- 7 Sweet Little Angel 3:11
- 8 That's All I Need 1:47
- 9 What Have I Done Wrong 4:35
- 10 Baby, You Torture My Soul 3:41
- 11 I'm So Glad 2:16
- 12 Shake A Hand 2:56

RECORDED IN JANUARY, 1968  
AT MAGIC SAM'S HOME, CHICAGO

### MAGIC SAM Vocals and Guitar

Eddie Boyd performs guest vocal on track 5

**MAGIC SAM**, like another Sam who lived in Chicago, Sam Cooke, was among the greatest vocalists of all time. Those who appreciate intense, passionate blues/soul singing will love this album. Although Magic Sam was also a genius guitarist, guitar aficionados would do better to experience any of the other Magic Sam Delmark releases.

Similar to **Magic Sam Live** (Delmark 645) these performances were recorded by a Magic Sam fanatic, on a home tape deck. In this case, though, there was probably no remote thought or plans that the material would ever be released on the commercial market. Bill Lindemann was a close personal friend of Sam's. He recorded this album at Magic Sam's house in January 1968 and was also involved in the earlier studio recording of six songs by Sam, four of which appear on the anthology "**Sweet Home Chicago**" (Delmark 618) and two on **The Magic Sam Legacy** (Delmark 651).

The recording quality of "**Give Me Time**" is not that of a session done at a professional studio, however, all that is currently technically possible has been done to the original tape source to provide the best sound possible. You'll hear things like Sam's kids playing in the house, somebody playing hand drums on one song or somebody reacting to Sam's singing with a heartfelt 'yeah!' That's the informal and intimate nature here.

Rare photos taken by Lindemann at Magic Sam's house which have never before appeared anywhere are enclosed within as well as complete liner notes by the founding editor of *Living Blues Magazine* Jim O'Neal. If you don't have any Magic Sam albums we suggest you start with **West Side Soul** (Delmark 615) and **Black Magic** (Delmark 620). If you do and are now ready to get to know Sam more personally then take this album home and enjoy.



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**M**AGIC SAM FOR A FEW BRIEF moments seemed destined to be the brightest star on the blues horizon. Then, all of a sudden, he was gone, dead of a heart attack at the age of 32.

Although I barely knew Sam and knew precious little about the blues in 1969, I felt an enormous sense of loss—a feeling shared throughout the blues world but especially in Chicago. Somehow it seemed that all of us—Sam, his fans, his fellow musicians—friends and family; indeed, the very course of the blues—had been robbed. Sam's death left a massive, immediate void on the Chicago blues scene, one that never was filled even though he left plenty of admirers and followers to carry his music on. What would have become of Magic Sam and his music, we'll never know. But everyone just *knew* that Sam was on the verge of something monumental.

A generation later, thousands of miles away, another handsome, personable young star emerged with a soulful voice, sharp guitar style, and more than a touch of Magic Sam in his music. What Magic Sam never lived to accomplish, maybe in some sense Robert Cray did.

But there was never another Magic Sam. There was no one else who so eloquently expressed both the joys and sorrows of the blues with such radiance and depth. He showed us how happy the blues could be, but he proved how much pain it could carry, too.

Sam Maghett was a friend and mentor to the whole west side blues circle, a brilliant guitarist, an amazing singer, an entertainer second to none. My most striking memory of him was that beaming smile he flashed onstage at the '69 Ann Arbor Blues Festival (where his performance was the talk of the blues world for long afterwards, finally ending up on Delmark's **Magic Sam Live** album)—the same warm smile I remember when I met him coming down the stairs after a show at the Aragon Ballroom. Later, some adventurous college friends and I headed over to Sam's neighborhood of the west side, hoping to catch him at the L&A Lounge at 14th and Pulaski. Sam wasn't performing, but he was there, in a nearby empty bar chatting with Mighty Joe Young. We were awestruck to find famous blues stars to be such friendly, down-to-earth, easygoing people. Sam laughed and talked and even said we should plan to come to his house one day soon for a barbecue. Then my friend Lenny Freed phoned him to set a date for a get-together—again I was amazed: was it this easy to socialize with legendary musical heroes? How could Lenny actually have the chutzpah to phone Magic Sam like he was just a regular person?

That was, obviously, the beauty of Magic Sam and, indeed of the whole blues community: folks were real, they were warm, they were approachable, they loved to talk and have fun and have you join in with

them. I'd been writing for the Northwestern University newspaper about both blues and rock music (mainly sports, though); within a matter of months it was all blues, and has been ever since. Sam had just died when Bruce Iglauer, Amy van Singel, Paul Garon, Diane Allmen and a few others of us started *Living Blues Magazine*. At first we wanted to make the debut issue a tribute to Sam and put his photo on the cover; while we did print a Magic Sam tribute, we decided that a magazine devoted to the living blues tradition should have a living blues legend on the cover, so the honor went to Howlin' Wolf.

In the meantime, thanks to Delmark's Bob Koester, greatest preserver of the Magic Sam legacy, I had a chance to write my first album liner notes for Sam's **Black Magic** album. While the glowing naivete of those notes is enough to make me shudder now, I remain no less in awe of Magic Sam today than I was 22 years ago. I remember summoning enough nerve to phone up Sam myself with a list of questions.

Curiously enough, the first thing I wanted to know was, what did someone like Magic Sam do when he wasn't performing? His answer: "I sit around and babysit, play my guitar, watch the ball game, barbecue—hey, don't forget that barbecuin'!" Which brings us neatly to the music at hand, **Give Me Time**, and my second shot at liner notes for Magic Sam. These informal tapes, made at Sam's house in January 1968 by his friend and producer Bill Lindemann, have circulated among collectors for years but were never released commercially. They show Sam playing and singing with all his heart and soul as if he were onstage; only the band and the crowd are missing. To replace them, we do occasionally hear his young children's voices in the background, as well as something that sounds like knives and forks—maybe it was barbecue time, too. No ball game on the tube, but otherwise it could be any day at the Sam Maghett house just as he described it. Sam goes through his repertoire, playing guitar in the same way he would if the band were there, singing mostly familiar material (some of which he recorded at various studio sessions with revised lyrics). We also get a surprise vocalist (and possible dinner guest), Eddie Boyd, on one cut.

I often wished I'd had the privilege at being at one of Sam's barbecue party jam sessions. When I phoned to interview Sam, he wanted me to come over to the house at 1513 Hardin. I lived miles away, on the far north side, and had no car and no ride that day. Sam said I could make it by bus; as an inexperienced CTA traveler just up from Alabama at the time, I wasn't so sure of that, so we settled for doing the interview by phone, still planning on a barbecue for later.

Sam, who said he'd just returned from a fishing trip in Michigan, was at home babysitting his children,

then aged seven, five, four, and two: "These kids are about to drive me crazy." He rattled off a list of places he'd been playing recently, from the Fillmore and Ash Grove in California to colleges in Wisconsin and Chicago to the blues clubs of the west side. He spoke candidly about his music, his aspirations, his upcoming album, and his neighborhood (he was proud to be a west side man). He seemed in a serious mood, friendly enough, but not in the "happy-go-lucky" way he was known for. He boasted of his new album: "I think my album's the best I've ever heard. I'm not saying it because it's mine. It's got more of a soul selection and a feel than anything I've ever heard in a long time." But he also said, "I'm not completely satisfied," and thought it could have been better.

How did he picture himself as a musician? "I play

### **Sam Maghett was a friend**

the blues—I am a bluesman, but not the dated blues, the modern type of blues. I'm the modern type of bluesman. But I can play the regular stuff, and also I

### **and mentor to the whole**

am a variety guy. I can play the soul stuff too." In the Chicago clubs, he added, "A lot of guys don't even want to play the blues—want to get jazzy. I play any-

### **west side blues circle,**

thing." He preferred playing on the west side, where audiences were more receptive, he felt, than on the south side, even though he started out on the south

### **a brilliant guitarist,**

side himself. "But like go on the south side and lookin' for a gig—no. I don't like it. I could be wrong but I don't like the south side—they don't accept a guy and

### **an amazing singer, an**

they don't turn out and appreciate like this west side. I started off at Pepper's [a legendary south side blues bar at 43rd and Vincennes]. . . Noooo, I don't go out to

### **entertainer second to none.**

Pepper's now. I have nothin' against Pepper's. I just don't like Pepper's. This is off the record—just say I like Pepper's."

Back in those days, before the white north side clubs took hold, the west side/south side controversy seemed an important topic on the local scene. The south side was the old, larger, established black residential and business district, generally thought of as

more sophisticated than the west side, although each area had its nice neighborhoods and seedy areas as well. Migrants from Mississippi, most poor and uneducated, often settled first on the west side, which rapidly changed in the 1950s as white families moved out en masse rather than live side by side with blacks. Although the south side has always had its great clubs, the west side had (and still has) the greater appeal to many of those seeking unaffected, down-home settings for the blues. It had a rough reputation (though no worse than the gang-ridden neighborhood around Pepper's, really). Sam was well aware that the very words "west side" could cause certain people to tremble in their boots.

He felt it his duty to reassure visiting clubgoers: "Have no fear—really enjoy yourself. I'm sure you people feel a little something—that's going to happen to you automatically anywhere you go. You can go into your own people's place and if you ain't never been there for three months, you're gonna feel some kind of something." Crime, he said, was local, black on black and rarely directed at outsiders. As for potential trouble, he confided, don't worry: "I can clear it."

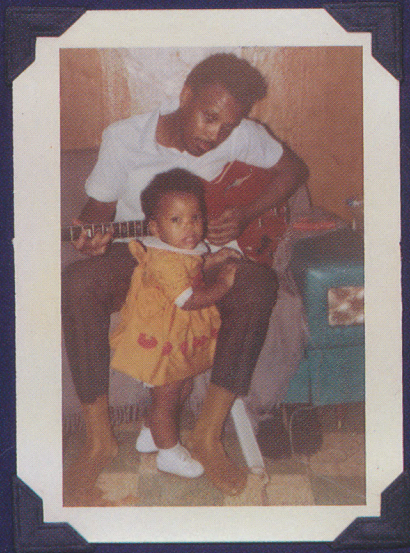
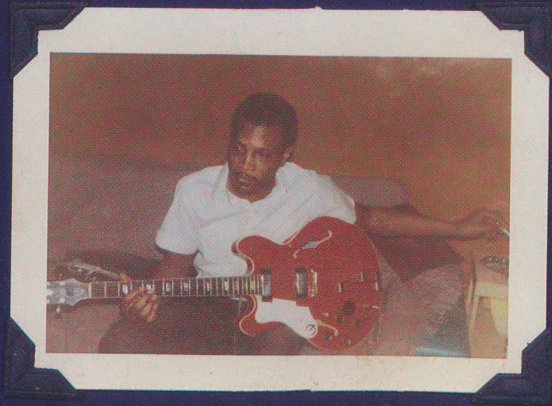
And what did this blues hero, this spokesman for his people, this magnificent mesmerizer of audiences, plan for the future? "My plan is to make a lot of money." He respected Taj Mahal and Jimi Hendrix, he said, because "they're making money. They gotta be good." So much for romantic, altruistic visions of the blues, but no less a hero, spokesman, or mesmerizer.

Final thoughts? What was it important for me to say about him? "Magic Sam is the west side's barbecue brother."

Neither I nor Lenny Freed ever made it to Magic Sam's house; we never tasted his barbecue, never heard him in the setting you hear on this album. I never even knew what became of Lenny after that. But I never again hesitated to go to the west side or any other foreboding blues land. And the aura of Magic Sam lived on. Soon I came to know the west side musicians, families and friends of the Magic Sam circle, had my share of barbecue and blues house parties in the end thanks to Letha (Mrs. Johnnie) Jones and others, and rejoiced a little wistfully whenever I heard yet another west side rendition of *All Your Love* or any other Magic Sam song. But oh, how everybody missed him. We all still do.

JIM O'NEAL  
FOUNDING EDITOR,  
*LIVING BLUES MAGAZINE*  
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**MAGIC SAM: Vocals and Guitar**

Eddie Boyd performs guest vocal on track 5

Album Production: **ROBERT G. KOESTER** and **STEVE WAGNER**

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